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The Reciprocity Convention.

Well, the free traders did not stampede the reciprocity convention, and that New York manufacturer who remained away through fear of such action missed a good time. Had he attended he would have met a large number of bright men, all, like himself, intensely interested in the policy of protection, and desirous that it be continued for the benefit of every American industry still needing it. He would have heard some excellent addresses in that line of thought, and he might have been inspired to speak himself. He undoubtedly missed something by his absence. Whether the convention did is a question. Faint heart does not any more deserve to win in trade than in love.

No, the protectionists dominated the convention, as was to be expected. Every delegate had something to show for protection, and consequently all were advocates of a continuation of the policy. And reciprocity? Why, certainly. Reciprocity, too, and so arranged as not to injure any branch of established American business. But there came the rub. The Kasson treaties were clearly not in favor. Their amendment was not advised. Other special treaties to take their place and avoid their errors were not proposed. The way out was thought to be the appointment of a tariff commission to take the whole question under consideration and make suggestions to the President and to Congress. This proposition received practically a unanimous vote, and there we are. Did the convention justify the call? Why not? We all know that there were wide differences of opinion among the business interests on this subject; that while all wished for an increased foreign trade there were difficulties in the way of securing it that would require great skill in the arrangements. This is plainer now than ever since these long-headed men of practical affairs have met and compared notes. They want more trade, and they think it can be obtained, but they want to go about it a little cat-footedly, so as not to alarm anybody nor make any mistakes. Softly is their watchword.

But, at last, the question is up to the President and to Congress. We have Mr. McKinley's Buffalo speech, which was not a random utterance. It meant something. We have the figures, showing the extent of our trade and the necessity for wider fields of operation. They are of the kind that do not lie. They delight everybody. They are calculated almost to turn us into a nation of drummers. Now what shall we do to be saved? We have the most alert rivals the business world has ever known. It will truly be now the early bird that catches the worm. Shall the worm be permitted to disappear while we are talking through commissions and our hats about the best means of taking it?

The Isthmian Troubles.

The fighting in Colombia has come to a more serious stage, as far as the American interests in the isthmus are concerned, than at any previous period of the trouble. With the revolutionists in possession of Colon the canal question comes at once to the front. It is gratifying, however, to observe that the American marines are on hand to protect the rights and to meet the treaty obligations of this government. They will serve as a palpable token of the fact that the United States has in its charge questions of greater importance to South and Central America than the mere readjustment of administration can possibly be even to the immediately affected state. Railway communication is to be kept open in Colombia. The marines at Colon stand for the American intention to prevent a permanent or prolonged interruption of the traffic.

The Isthmian canal may eventually prove even more than the Panama railway a settling agent, tending to bring about the gradual cessation of these troublesome revolts. The waterway will foster the development of trade and the exploitation of the products of the soil. It will serve gradually to elevate the commercial idea above the political. In proportion as large amounts of capital are located in this region its affairs will become more stable.

Prophets of the press who a few weeks ago made the forecast that President Roosevelt's first message would be the shortest on record are now prophesying that it will be the longest. They would rather be right than consistent, and still they may not be right.

When the railways are all consolidated under one management there may be a passage at arms now and then to determine which is the bigger man, the railway boss or the political boss.

There are some politicians who would be willing to change the name of a neighbor state from Maryland to Gormania.

When a Boer general transmits a report, he seldom takes the time to attach any regrets.

A New Department Demanded.

The demand for the creation of a new executive department, to include within its scope the commerce and industries of the country, continues to be heard from various parts of the republic. In the past it has come mainly from the middle west. The other day it was heard from Boston, and now the latest expression comes from the American manufacturers assembled in convention in this city. It is assuming the character of a national proposition. It is based upon an estimate of the importance of the country's commercial interests in the public economy, stimulated by the remarkable prosperity of the past few years and the extension of the American trade far into the world field. The work of the industrial commission, now approaching a close, is regarded by many as an exemplar of the kind of service such a department might conduct in some degree. There is already a "department" of labor, strictly speaking a bureau, and likewise a division of the Treasury Department is devoted to the compilation of trade statistics. There is at present no co-operation between these two, save casually.

A department of commerce and industry, under whatever name, would probably conserve effectively all of the governmental energies susceptible of practical application for the fostering of our trade and the adjustment of our industrial problems. In the days to come there will be much serious work for the federal establishment in meeting the questions raised by the growth of trusts. The railroad situation has long since grown away from the scope of the interstate commerce commission, a board of inquiry without power to enforce its decisions. The trade statistics and regulations relate too remotely in these days of specialism to the financial features of the administration to remain an appurtenance of the Treasury Department's work. From one and another of the now scattered executive agencies could easily be accumulated the materials for an active, effective department, whose head might then represent in person the government's care of its trade and industrial factors.

Of course, the process of division and subdivision of the governmental work might be carried on to an unnecessary extent. A natural limit to the course can, however, be confidently relied upon to prevent an undue provision of officials and an unwise splitting of responsibility. Under ordinary circumstances a bureau is better for the public good than a department, for the work conducted by it is more intimately understood by the accountable chief. Yet occasionally the public welfare demands expansion, as in the case of the Department of Agriculture, which has fully justified its elevation to cabinet rank. This instance, indeed, clearly points today to the advisability and the justice of devoting equal consideration to the forces which, working alongside those of agriculture, are making of the United States a great force in the world's affairs.

Lord Salisbury's Mistake.

A London cable says:

"In a letter conveying an expression of his thanks for a vote of confidence in the policy of the government, Lord Salisbury administers the following characteristic rebuke to pro-Boers in Great Britain:

"'We need such encouragement, for England is, I believe, the only country in which during a great war eminent men write and speak publicly as if they belonged to the enemy.'"

What's the matter with the United States? Why are we ignored? Has any pro-Boer Englishman assailed his government in severer terms than have been employed against this government by those Americans who sympathize with the Filipinos? Lord Salisbury has simply been too busy of late to read the American newspapers, or has neglected to subscribe for the pamphlets of the Anti-Imperialist League. England is not entitled to the lone eminence to which he assigns her.

It is curious, indeed, how closely the anti-government arguments in the two cases resemble each other. The Atkinsonians have always contended that the Filipinos were forced into hostilities. It has availed nothing to point out to them how carefully Aguinaldo had prepared for war; how he had drilled his men and infused into them the spirit of resistance to the Americans, and that he struck the first blow. The Atkinsonians still insist that we had no proper business in the country, that we carried ourselves insultingly and aggressively toward a brave people aspiring to liberty, and that our conduct meets with reprobation as that of a bully. They did not spare even as amiable a man as Mr. McKinley, and Mr. Roosevelt of course can expect no mercy at their hands. They are not, even now, without hope of forcing the government to abandon its policy and withdraw from the scene. At least they say they are not.

Doesn't this about describe the pro-Boer attitude in England? Isn't it contended that Mr. Kruger was forced into hostilities? Does it avail anything to point out how long and carefully the Boers prepared for war; how thoroughly prepared they were when war came, and that they boldly rode over into English territory and struck the first blow? The pro-Boers still insist that their countrymen in South Africa, manipulated by a few disreputable millionaires in London, were at the bottom of all the trouble, and that even now the British government should call a halt and restore the Boers to their former power. The Boer in arms, they assert, is the hero; the Englishman in arms the bully.

Lord Salisbury in this matter has spoken without sufficient information, and revealed the fact that he has missed some choice exhibitions of how vigorously men of eminence may play an enemy's game against their own country. The Morleys and the Labouchères are well enough in their way, but they cannot hold a candle to the Atkinsons, the Boutwells, and the Bradfords when it comes to giving one's own government a black eye and a bad reputation.

A National Highway.

Citizens of Knox county and Knoxville, Tenn., have resurrected and elaborated a scheme for dissipating the surplus. They have, it is announced, prepared a petition to Congress that fifty million dollars be appropriated for the construction of a public highway from Washington to New Orleans. This highway is to be one hundred feet wide, is to be paved with asphalt, is to have a watermain along its whole course and is to be lighted with electricity. Forty feet of the roadway are to be reserved for horses and horse vehicles; forty feet for motor carriages; ten feet for bicycles and ten feet for pedestrians. The petition has already been, or is to be, given to Representative Gibson for presentation to the House of Representatives.

The national highway of prime necessity is one not between Washington and New Orleans, but between Washington and Mount Vernon, the home and tomb of him who gave his name to the national capital; whose sword cut the tie that bound us subjects to a king and whose honesty and wisdom gave to the republic a start in the right direction in national life.

The Independent Voter.

The growth of individualism in politics is one of the lessons taught by the late elections. Commercial exclusionists, to whom a tariff schedule is more sacred than a divine command, see in the returns indorsement of their peculiar views; reciprocators translate the returns to give comfort to themselves; democrats profess to augur from the results that the wounds of their party are healing. But, the feature of the elections was the prominence of the independent voter. The ease with which a voter may now slip through party lines appals the iron-clad partisan. It is no longer a mortal sin in politics to repudiate a caucus nominee. Time was, when a bolter in the eyes of many men, perhaps of most men, was contemptible. He was in danger of being boycotted by polite society and otherwise harassed in private life. That time has passed. If the voter shall continue to progress along the lines indicated by his conduct on November 5 the occupation of the caucus manipulator and the party boss is in prospect gone.

Some men who get into Congress now and then are inclined to be thankful that the voters are not as strict in judging a man's qualifications for office as the President is disposed to be.

Ruhlin's confidence that he can still whip Jeffries shows that a pugilist differs from the ordinary man in that a licking does not convince him.

One of the most curious and fascinating things about Santos-Dumont's dirigible balloon is that no one is trying to sell stock in it.

When the southern republics get to fighting the casus belli is not eminently important. One of several may usually be selected.

One of the meanest men in the world is the one who persistently circulates the bogus matrimonial rumor.

The sultan's indemnity department is being permitted to take a brief vacation.

Jury Getting.

The Bonine jury was secured in a shorter period than was at first apprehended by the public. The notorious character of the case, the circumstantial nature of the evidence, the widespread discussion of it in all its details such a short time previously and the fact that a woman is on trial for her life, all tended to create the impression that only with extreme difficulty could twelve men be found to answer satisfactorily all the queries of counsel and court. But by rare fortune, or perhaps through the exercise of more than usual tact and skill in the handling of talesmen, the jury was completed within two days. In a case of similar character in New York this process would undoubtedly have occupied two weeks at least, while in New Jersey the jury would doubtless have been in the box and listening to the evidence within two hours from the entry of the plea. Washington, it will thus be seen, might do very much worse and also much better.

Nicotine sighs for more worlds to conquer. Tobacco is being grown where it was not grown before. It was not so long ago that the experiment of producing tobacco in south Florida was undertaken and success rewarded the work of the planters, so that today thousands of Key West cigars are made of tobacco grown in the sand of the Peninsula State. Then tobacco that is fragrant or otherwise according to one's smell, taste and opinion, is being grown on high lands in the far northwest, it being said that large strong stalks have been produced in upland valleys in Montana. News comes from across the sea that in a short time there will be made public the results of experiments in tobacco culture in Ireland which, begun in 1899, were taken in hand last season by an expert.

It is to be hoped that the editors of the Congressional Record have by this time found something equally entertaining to take the place of the epigrams contributed in the good old days by J. Hamilton Lewis.

Mr. Depew is expected to tell some very funny stories pretty soon about getting covered with soot from the stovepipe and hitting his thumb with the tack hammer.

After all, Senator Tillman's remarks merely demonstrated the inconsequential fact that he has no more respect for Booker Washington than he has for anybody else.

It is to be assumed that the people who use Mr. Addicks' gas are looking at the meter with expectations of making further contributions to his campaign fund.

So long as prosperity is so common Mr. Bryan does not see why any personal prejudice should prevent him from stocking up a farm and getting a share of it.

It is rather remarkable that the Miss Stone episode in Bulgaria has so long escaped being dramatized.

No lady novelist can boast of having a quiet wedding.

SHOOTING STARS.

Busy Man.

"Did you marry an industrious, hard-working man?" said Miss Cayenne.

"Yes, indeed," said the girl with the picture hat; "Harold is never idle. He plays golf all summer and whist all winter."

Board and Lodging.

"Mike," said Plodding Pete, "I understan's de price o' meat an' vegetables is gittin' to be somethin' terrible."

"Well," responded Meandering Mike. "We don't have to pay fur de board dey gives us in de jail, do we. Cheer up an' let de tax-payers do de worryin'."

The Human Race.

Oh, life is a race that we all must begin.
Successes are scanty at most.
A lot of us start and a few of us win,
And a number get left at the post.

"If some folks was a hundredth part as ginerous wif ready money as dey is wif hoss-race tips," said Uncle Eben, "dat'd be mo' bony fide thanksgivin's."

Wholly Unusual.

"There is something wrong about that man," said Mr. Blykins, as he turned away from the mild-mannered citizen to whom he had just been introduced.

"He's a thorough student of political economy, and has the reputation of being very wise."

"I don't care. He ain't right. He ain't like other folks. He thinks it 'ud be possible to save this country without electing him to office."

The Autumn Rose.

Unnoted in my garden blooms
A lone, belated rose.
No other flower there presumes
Its radiance to disclose.
No butterfly, with graceful wing,
Salutes it 'mongst the rest;
Yet June day memories round it cling,
Though frost is in the air.

Ah, foolish rose—to waste your charm
Upon a careless world!
The wiser blossoms took alarm,
With petals long since furled.
Yet they who know the worth of life
Will prize you o'er the rest,
Who lightly smiled when smiles were rife,
And fled at winter's test.

When fortune gleams with balmy cheer
Across the toilsome way,
Fond flattery blossoms far and near
And gilds the passing day.
But 'tis the love that does not part
When chill disaster blows
That I would press unto my heart
Close, with the autumn rose.

Smoke Abatement at St. Louis.

From the New York Times.

Too much approval cannot be expressed of the plan of the managers of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1903, to be held in St. Louis, to make it in every detail a demonstration of the fact that the burning of bituminous coal can be effected without the usual accompaniment of sulphurous and tormenting smoke. The Smoke Abatement Association of St. Louis has taken the matter in hand, and, with the approval and co-operation of the directors of the fair, proposes to show the world that soft coal can be burned with economy without injurious smoke. Primarily, the exhibition itself is to be smokeless. This is essential to the preservation of the beauty of the buildings and the value of their contents. All coal consumed in the grounds must be smokelessly burned, and an effort will be made to induce the railroads running trains to points near the inclosure to adopt smoke-consuming devices for their locomotive engines.

A Base Hit.

From the Knoxville Journal and Tribune.

Even if John Wesley Gaines should not be able to convene on the first Monday in December, Congress may go on with its business, after a fashion.

Hope of the Democracy.

From the Cleveland Leader.

David B. Hill is willing to pose as Phoenix over the ruin of Tammany. Hill, after all, may be the only hope of the national democracy.

New York's Police Commissioner.

From the New York World.

Seth Low's administration will succeed or fail with his success or failure in selecting a police commissioner. In that one appointment is inextricably involved the whole question and fate of reform.

Right.

From the Tacoma Ledger.

Vienna, Budapest, Berlin, Paris are the most beautiful cities of Europe; Washington city of America.

Auspicious.

From the New York Tribune.

The sending of Great Britain's Australian mails by the way of New York is an impressive sign of the time, auspicious of what may happen when our isthmian canal is constructed.